



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

# **Statement from Yonkers Legislative Delegation Regarding 2014-15 Budget**

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

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“Yonkers is facing a fiscal crisis that requires immediate action. The final state budget will include \$17 million dollars for the Yonkers Public Schools, an increase of 7.67% over last year’s amount. This is a higher percentage increase than any of the big five school districts. In addition, by passing the Education bill, we will be taking the needed steps to address the crisis while expanding state oversight over both the City of Yonkers and the Yonkers School District.

By authorizing \$45 million in borrowing for operational deficits, and by granting \$28 million directly for the Yonkers Public Schools, the budget will allow the City of Yonkers to take immediate steps to fill much of gap. At the same time, in order to prevent this kind of financial mismanagement from happening again, we are

increasing direct state financial oversight by the Comptroller and the State Education Department over both the City of Yonkers and the Yonkers School District. While the ultimate language on governance is not what we would have wanted, it was required by the state in order to receive the additional education funds. Working together, we ensured that the Superintendent and the Board of Education will continue to retain authority over all educational matters.

As the provisions of this package are rolled out, we urge our City leaders to ensure that our children's needs are first and foremost. To that end, we urge the Mayor to release his specific plans on how this relief package will be implemented as quickly as possible and include all stakeholders in future discussions on this issue."